UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC

In Recital

JOACHIM SEGGER, PIANIST

Friday, February 27, 1987, 8:00 p.m.

Programme

Prelude and Fugue in E major, Bk.II	J.S. Bach (1685-1750)
Sonata no. 21 in F major Allegro Moderato [Larghetto] Adagio Finale: Presto	Franz Joseph Haydn (1732-1809)
Six Fantasies (1982) Arik Reminiscences de Turandot There is My People Sleeping in memory of Sarain Stump An Etude of Chopin Quicksilver Fallen Angel with a cold melancholy	Alfred Fisher (b. 1942)

INTERMISSION

Ballade no. 1 in G minor, Op. 23 Ballade no. 2 in F, Op. 38 Ballade no. 3 in A flat, Op. 47 Ballade no. 4 in F minor, Op. 52	Frederic Chopin (1810-1849)

Convocation Hall, Old Arts Building

Programme Notes

Bach Prelude and Fugue in E major, Bk.II

Of the 48 Preludes and Fugues Bach wrote for the keyboard, this most probably was conceived for the clavichord which had an expressive singing quality unlike the harpsichord. The theme for the fugue was taken from the collection Ariadne musica, written by John Caspar Ferdinand Fischer. This work was an important predecessor of Bach's Well-Tempered Clavier.

Haydn Sonata in F major

The first movement in typical Sonata-Allegro form is a wonderful example of playfulness within music. This charming movement is filled with expressive nuance and unexpected cadences.

The second movement in binary form, is intensely lyrical with an improvised melody framed by broken chord progressions in the left hand.

The last movement is a short rondo movement with delightful leaps contrasted with virtuoso figurations. This movement ends with a sigh.

Six Fantasies Alfred Fisher

The program notes, written by the composer, are printed at the end of this program. Alfred Fisher is a Canadian composer who has received numerous commissions from the Canada Council, CBC, Edmonton Symphony and others. His works have been played throughout North America and Europe. Born in Boston he is a Canadian citizen and is the Chairman of the Department of Music at the University of Alberta. The Fantasy Pieces were premiered by Joachim Segger in 1982 and recorded for the CBC

Chopin Ballades

Chopin's music is loved by people throughout the world. Known for it's haunting and beautiful melodies, Chopin's music is exemplary of the most idiomatic writing for the piano. He understood the complex series of overtones and how the piano as an instrument produced it's cantabile style and harmonic sonorities.

Chopin borrowed the term ballad from the literary style and made it his own for the piano. The Ballades are rich romantic works which utilize the sonorities and expressive qualities of the piano.

The G minor Ballade, Chopin's favorite, was written between the years 1831 and 1835. After the declamatory introduction, the key of G minor is confirmed, leading to the first theme, which is contrasted by the second theme in E flat major. After considerable development of both themes the piece ends with an explosive coda.

The Ballade in F major (1836-39) begins with an idyllic theme in F major followed by an eruptive outburst in A minor. Robert Schumann, to whom this ballade was dedicated remembers: "I have heard Chopin end his Ballade in F Major; today it finishes in A Minor."

One senses a unity of mood in the A flat major ballade of 1841. The main theme in A flat provides motivic material for the second theme. The coda, in Alfred Cortot's words, is more melancholy than triumphant in spite of it's virtuoso character. One can sense the unity especially in the coda where the second theme is transformed into the first.

The F minor ballade written in 1842 begins with an ethereal introduction leading into the first theme. This theme is simply stated, like a Nocturne, and gradually unfolds into a wondrous world of improvisation and unspeakable beauty. The coda is a dramatic tempest of contrapuntal entanglement.

Joachim Segger

Composer's Notes on Fantasy Pieces

The Fantasy Pieces were written in the summer of 1982 on commission from the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. With its titles and personal tone, it stands squarely in the tradition of the romantic "character piece". Technically, the work is based on an interval-class set introduced in the first movement and explored throughout the work.

ARIK is an assertive, almost aggressive piece. Its energetic forward movement is dialectically engaged with a series of fragments of a more ornamental, reflective cast. As in all dialectic, the strength of the statement is referable as much to an essence shared as to issues opposed. Arik is the name of a friend I've never met.

REMINISCENCES DE TURANDOT has more to do with the organization of harmonic sonority than the familiar themes of Puccini's masterpiece. The ordering process itself, however, gives rise to harmonic types that are strongly reminiscent of the magnificent open harmonies of Turandot. Only the last breathless gesture of the movement is a literal quote ... one of the best-loved phrases ever conceived ... though presented here in a context that could not be more radically removed from the lush environs of Turandot.

Sarain Stump was an artist and a poet and a native North American. His eloquent book, THERE IS MY PEOPLE SLEEPING suggested for me a new understanding of the art of narrative. For me, it deepened and profoundly changed the notion of "My People" from the ethnocentric to the sacred. Like Sarain's work, this piece is a narrative composed of a series of pictures, each with its own poetic reflection. The "scenes" are here presented as the successive phrases of an old Jewish folktune followed by commentary.

The idea of "piano music" seems even today to be almost inseparable from the name of Chopin. AN ETUDE OF CHOPIN reflects the dazzling transparency and brilliantly "right" proportions of a Chopin work. In a world that continues to adore Chopin, there should be little doubt about the specific model for this movement.

QUICKSILVER is a tightly knit motivic study bringing the intervallic basis used in the organization of the entire work top its most concentrated expression. As well, it functions as a preparation for FALLEN ANGELS, the following and final movement. Here the energy and tension of the previous movements is entirely exhausted. Fundamental materials of the work are presented as a series of solitudes ... sculpture lining a long, dark corridor. The review is interrupted by a baleful but passive little tune that mediates between the rhythmic/sonorous vitality of the previous movements and the mysteriously heightened, inarticulate silence that follows.

Alfred Fisher